

Knowledge, Wisdom, and Truth

A Greek Word Study in the Theology of Divine Illumination

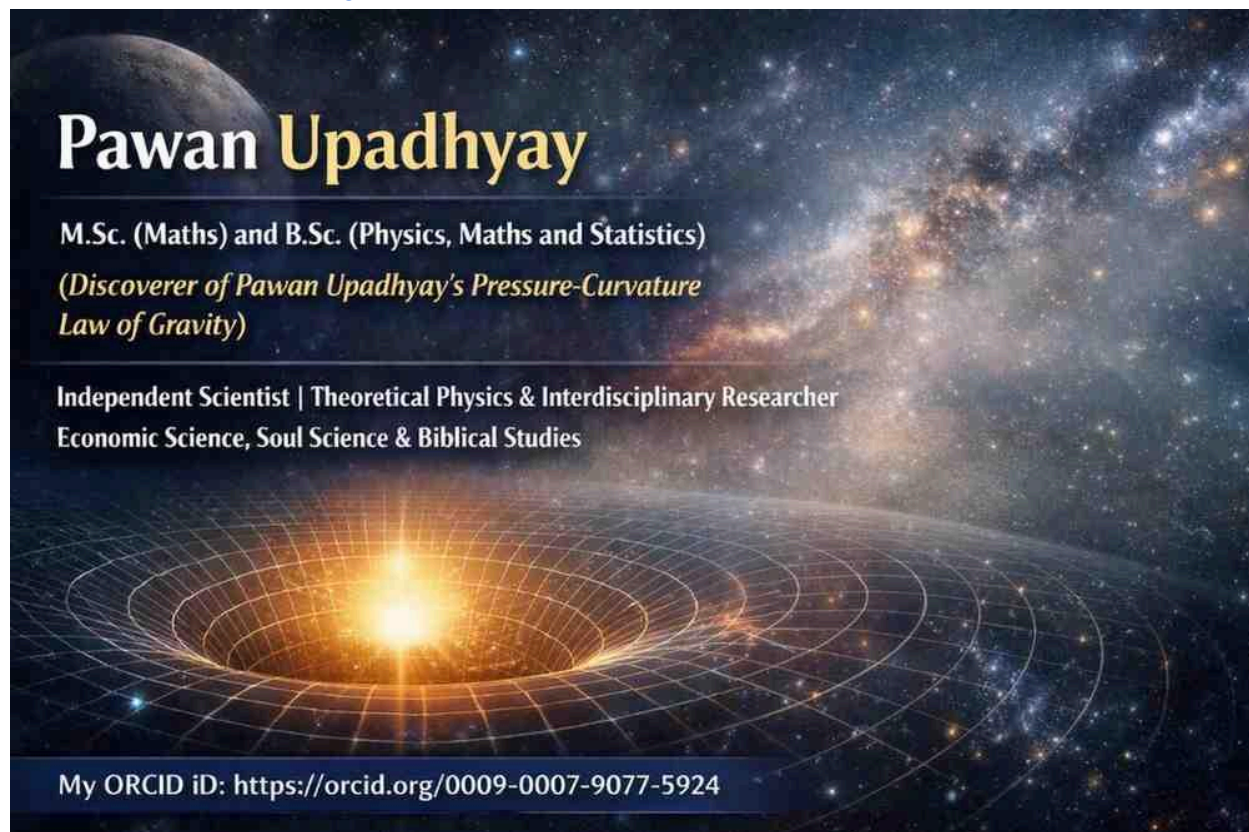
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Abstract

This study examines three important Greek terms—**γνῶσις** (*gnōsis*, knowledge), **σοφία** (*sophia*, wisdom), and **ἀλήθεια** (*alētheia*, truth)—and considers their relationship within a Christian theological model of divine illumination. The study argues that these terms possess distinct but related semantic fields and should not be treated as interchangeable. **γνῶσις**

concerns knowledge or knowing; **σοφία** concerns wisdom, understanding, and discernment; and **ἀλήθεια** concerns truth and reality.

The study proposes that, within a Christian theological framework, divine illumination can be understood as a movement in which the human spirit receives divine light, the mind receives understanding, knowledge develops into wisdom, and wisdom enables the recognition of Truth. This theological sequence is expressed as:

Divine Illumination → Knowledge → Wisdom → Truth

The study further examines the relationship between this model and the Christian concepts of the **Spirit of Truth** and **Jesus Christ as the Living Word**. It also considers how this framework may illuminate the progression of seeking, finding, trouble, astonishment, reign, and rest found in Gospel of Thomas Saying 2. The study maintains a methodological distinction between lexical meaning, literary interpretation, and theological synthesis.

1. Introduction

The search for knowledge, wisdom, and Truth is fundamental to the human search for God.

A person may possess knowledge without wisdom. A person may possess wisdom concerning ordinary matters without recognizing divine Truth. Likewise, a person may hear words about Truth without allowing Truth to transform the inner person.

Christian theology understands divine revelation as more than the communication of information. Divine revelation involves the disclosure of Truth and the illumination of the human person so that the person can perceive, understand, and respond to what God reveals.

This study investigates three Greek terms that are particularly important for articulating these distinctions:

γνῶσις — knowledge

σοφία — wisdom

ἀλήθεια — truth

The purpose is not to claim that these three Greek words form a fixed three-stage sequence in ancient Greek usage. They do not.

Rather, the purpose is to examine their individual meanings and then ask whether they can be brought together into a coherent Christian theological model of divine illumination.

The central proposal is:

Divine illumination leads the human person toward knowledge; knowledge develops into wisdom; and wisdom enables the recognition of Truth.

2. Research Question

The primary question of this study is:

How can the Greek concepts of γνῶσις, σοφία, and ἀλήθεια be distinguished linguistically and related theologically within a Christian model of divine illumination?

Several secondary questions follow:

1. What does γνῶσις mean in Greek and Christian usage?
 2. What does σοφία mean in Greek and Christian usage?
 3. What does ἀλήθεια mean in Greek and Christian usage?
 4. How are knowledge, wisdom, and Truth related without becoming synonymous?
 5. How can these concepts be incorporated into a theology of divine illumination?
 6. How does the Spirit of Truth relate to this process?
 7. How can Jesus Christ as the Living Word be related to the recognition of Truth?
 8. Can this theological framework illuminate the seeker's transformation in Gospel of Thomas Saying 2?
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3. Method

This study uses three levels of analysis.

3.1 Lexical Analysis

The first level examines the Greek vocabulary itself.

The principal terms are:

γνῶσις

σοφία

ἀλήθεια

Their semantic ranges are considered before theological conclusions are drawn.

3.2 Literary and Biblical Analysis

The second level considers how these concepts function in Christian writings, especially the New Testament.

Particular attention is given to Johannine passages concerning:

- the Word;
- Truth;
- the Spirit of Truth;
- revelation;
- and divine guidance.

3.3 Theological Synthesis

The third level develops the proposed Christian theological model.

The study therefore follows:

Greek Word → Semantic Range → Literary Context → Biblical Theology → Theological Synthesis

This prevents a theological interpretation from being mistaken for a dictionary definition.

4. γνῶσις — Knowledge

4.1 The Greek Word

The Greek noun is:

γνῶσις

Transliteration:

gnōsis

It is related to the verb:

γινώσκω — to know, come to know, recognize

The noun γνῶσις therefore belongs to the semantic field of **knowing and knowledge**.

It may refer to knowledge generally, but in Christian writings it can also refer to knowledge associated with God, spiritual realities, Christ, and divine revelation.

5. The Meaning of Knowledge

Knowledge represents the state or result of knowing.

The basic theological question associated with γνῶσις is:

What has been known or revealed?

Thus:

γινώσκω → γνῶσις

Knowing → Knowledge

Within the theological model of this study, divine illumination produces knowledge because illumination enables the person to perceive what was previously unknown or insufficiently understood.

The movement is:

Illumination → Knowledge

6. Knowledge Is Not Wisdom

Knowledge and wisdom must not be confused.

A person may know many facts without knowing how to understand them properly.

Therefore:

Knowledge ≠ Wisdom

Knowledge can provide information.

Wisdom provides deeper understanding and discernment concerning what has been known.

The distinction is essential to the theological model proposed here.

7. σοφία — Wisdom

7.1 The Greek Word

The Greek noun is:

σοφία

Transliteration:

sophia

The semantic range of σοφία is broad.

It can refer to:

- wisdom;
- intelligence;
- skill;
- learning;
- practical judgment;
- discernment;
- and, in theological contexts, divine wisdom.

Greek usage demonstrates that σοφία is not limited to abstract intellectual knowledge.

Wisdom can involve the ability to understand reality and act appropriately in light of that understanding.

8. Wisdom and Deeper Understanding

Within this study, σοφία represents a deeper stage of understanding.

The movement can therefore be expressed:

Knowledge → Wisdom

Knowledge asks:

What do I know?

Wisdom asks:

What does what I know mean?

And more deeply:

How should what I know be understood and lived?

Wisdom therefore integrates knowledge into understanding.

9. Divine Wisdom

Christian Greek writings also use σοφία in contexts involving **divine wisdom**.

This is particularly important for the present study.

If divine illumination produces knowledge, then divine wisdom represents a deeper understanding of what has been revealed.

The process becomes:

Divine Illumination

↓

γνῶσις — Knowledge

↓

σοφία — Wisdom

The seeker therefore does not remain at the level of information.

The seeker progresses toward understanding.

10. ἀλήθεια — Truth

10.1 The Greek Word

The Greek noun is:

ἀλήθεια

Transliteration:

alētheia

The word belongs to the semantic field of **truth, reality, genuineness, and what corresponds to what is actually the case.**

It can stand in opposition to:

- falsehood;
- deception;
- error;
- and mere appearance.

Therefore, ἀλήθεια can carry a deeper meaning than simply “a correct statement.”

It can refer to **what is true and real.**

11. Truth and Reality

The concept of ἀλήθεια is especially important to the theological model because Truth can be understood as reality as opposed to illusion or falsehood.

The seeker therefore does not merely seek information.

The seeker seeks to know:

What is truly real?

This provides a theological connection between the search for knowledge and the recognition of Truth.

The proposed progression becomes:

Seeking → Knowledge → Wisdom → Truth

12. Knowledge, Wisdom, and Truth Distinguished

The three concepts can now be distinguished:

Greek	Transliteration	Primary Concept	Function in This Study
γνῶσις	<i>gnōsis</i>	Knowledge	What is known
σοφία	<i>sophia</i>	Wisdom	Deeper understanding of what is known
ἀλήθεια	<i>alētheia</i>	Truth / Reality	What is genuinely true and real

The distinction can be summarized:

γνῶσις knows.

σοφία understands.

ἀλήθεια is Truth.

This formulation is a theological summary rather than a literal dictionary definition.

13. The Proposed Progression

The three concepts can be arranged within the theological model as:

γνῶσις → σοφία → ἀλήθεια

Knowledge → Wisdom → Truth

The reasoning is:

1. The person receives or acquires knowledge.
2. Knowledge is understood through wisdom.
3. Wisdom enables the person to recognize what is true and real.

This progression should not be imposed upon every occurrence of these Greek words. It is a conceptual model developed for the present theological study.

14. Divine Illumination

The three concepts become particularly significant when placed within a theology of divine illumination.

The proposed model begins:

One Most High God

↓

Divine Illumination

↓

Human Spirit

↓

Knowledge

↓

Wisdom

↓

Truth

The illumination originates in God.

The human spirit receives illumination.

The illuminated person gains understanding.

Knowledge develops into wisdom.

Wisdom leads toward recognition of Truth.

15. The Human Spirit

Within the theological framework of this study, divine illumination first illuminates the **human spirit**.

The illuminated spirit then affects the whole person.

The process can be represented as:

Divine Illumination

↓

Spirit Illuminated

↓

Mind Enlightened

↓

Heart Awakened

↓

Whole Person Transformed

This is a theological model rather than a physiological description.

The study does not propose that the spirit is a physical organ or that divine illumination can be measured as a neurological process.

Rather, it describes the spiritual transformation of the human person.

16. Mind, Brain, and Heart

The human person has different dimensions.

The **mind** is associated with understanding, reasoning, and intellectual perception.

The **brain** is the physical organ through which human cognition occurs.

The **heart**, in biblical theological language, can represent the inner center of a person's intentions, desires, faith, and response.

Accordingly, divine illumination is understood as affecting the whole person:

Spirit → Mind → Heart → Life

The theological objective is therefore not merely intellectual enlightenment.

It is **whole-person transformation**.

17. The Spirit of Truth

The Christian concept of the **Spirit of Truth** provides an important theological foundation for this model.

The Gospel of John describes the Advocate as the **Spirit of Truth**.

The Spirit is associated with:

- dwelling with believers;
- being in believers;
- testifying concerning Christ;
- guiding believers into Truth;
- and glorifying Christ.

The Johannine formulation is:

τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας

to pneuma tēs alētheias

the Spirit of Truth

This provides a direct connection between **Spirit** and **ἀλήθεια** within the Christian theological vocabulary.

18. The Spirit of Truth and Illumination

Within the model proposed here:

Spirit of Truth

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Divine Illumination

↓

Human Spirit

↓

Knowledge

↓

Wisdom

↓

Truth

The Spirit of Truth therefore functions as the theological bridge between divine revelation and human understanding.

The person does not reach divine Truth through intellectual effort alone.

The person requires divine illumination.

19. Jesus Christ and Truth

The Christian framework also connects Truth with Jesus Christ.

The Johannine tradition identifies Christ with the **Word** and presents the Spirit of Truth as testifying concerning Christ.

This allows the theological model to move from:

Truth

to:

Jesus Christ, the Living Word

The formulation is not intended to redefine the lexical meaning of ἀλήθεια.

Rather, it is a christological interpretation:

Within Christian theology, divine Truth is understood in relation to Jesus Christ.

Thus:

Spirit of Truth → Truth → Christ

20. The Living Word

Jesus Christ is understood in this study as the **Living Word**.

The Johannine prologue begins with the Word and identifies the Word with God before describing the Word becoming flesh.

Therefore, within Christian theology, the Word is not merely a spoken sound or written statement.

The Word is understood personally in Christ.

This provides an important theological connection:

Divine Truth

↓

Living Word

↓

Jesus Christ

The seeker who encounters Truth is therefore, within this Christian interpretation, brought into relation with Christ.

21. Truth as Transformation

If Truth is merely information, then knowing Truth would mean possessing correct information.

But within the theological model of this study, Truth is transformative.

The person who recognizes Truth must respond to Truth.

Therefore:

Truth Known

↓

Truth Understood

↓

Truth Received

↓

Truth Lived

The heart becomes important at this point.

The person is not merely intellectually informed.

The person is transformed.

22. Knowledge, Wisdom, and the Heart

The theological sequence can therefore be expanded:

Divine Illumination

↓

Human Spirit

↓

Knowledge

↓

Wisdom

↓

Truth

↓

Heart

↓

Transformation

Knowledge begins in understanding.

Wisdom deepens understanding.

Truth demands recognition and response.

The heart receives what the mind understands.

The entire person is transformed.

23. Connection with Gospel of Thomas Saying 2

This theological model may also be brought into dialogue with Gospel of Thomas Saying 2.

The saying presents the seeker moving through a sequence that, in the Coptic witness, can be represented as:

Seeking → Finding → Trouble → Astonishment → Reigning over the All

The Greek witness preserves:

Seeking → Finding → Astonishment → Reigning → Rest

The theological model proposed in this study provides a possible explanation for the deeper transformation represented by that sequence.

The seeker begins by seeking.

Divine illumination enables the seeker to understand.

Knowledge develops into wisdom.

Wisdom leads toward recognition of Truth.

The encounter with Truth disrupts previous understanding.

The seeker becomes troubled.

Trouble gives way to astonishment.

Astonishment is followed by the language of reign.

The Greek witness then concludes with rest.

24. The Finding of Truth

The word “finding” in Saying 2 should not simply be equated lexically with finding Truth.

The Greek verb for “find” does not itself mean “find Truth.”

However, within the theological interpretation proposed here, the object of the seeker's search may be understood as Truth.

The conceptual relationship is:

Seeking

↓

Finding

↓

Recognition of Truth

This distinction is important for scholarly accuracy.

The text provides the language of seeking and finding.

The theological interpretation proposes what the seeker may be understood to find.

25. Trouble and the Discovery of Truth

The Coptic witness introduces a stage of trouble after finding.

Within this theological framework, the trouble may be interpreted as the disturbance produced when Truth challenges the seeker's previous understanding.

The sequence becomes:

Finding → Trouble → Astonishment

The seeker discovers something that cannot simply be added to the old understanding.

The old framework must change.

Thus:

The discovery of Truth becomes transformative because Truth challenges what the seeker previously believed to be true.

26. Astonishment

Astonishment represents a further stage of transformation.

The seeker is no longer merely acquiring information.

The seeker is encountering a reality greater than previous understanding.

Therefore:

Knowledge → Wisdom → Truth → Astonishment

Astonishment can thus be understood as the emotional and spiritual response to the depth of what has been discovered.

This remains an interpretation of the saying rather than a lexical definition of the Greek verb.

27. Truth Reigns Within

The theological model proposes that Truth must first reign within the person.

Thus:

Truth must first reign within the heart before spiritual reign can be expressed outwardly.

The process is:

Spirit Illuminated

↓

Mind Enlightened

↓

Heart Awakened

↓

Truth Recognized

↓

Truth Reigns Within

This inward reign provides the theological foundation for interpreting the language of spiritual authority.

28. Spiritual Authority Through Christ

The language of “reigning” in Saying 2 can then be interpreted through the Christian theological framework of this study.

The seeker does not possess independent divine authority.

Rather, spiritual authority is understood as participation in Truth through Christ.

Therefore:

Truth

↓

Christ

↓

Transformation

↓

Spiritual Authority

↓

Reign

The authority is consequently understood as derivative rather than autonomous.

29. Reign and Rest

The Greek witness gives the final sequence:

Reigning → Rest

This can be interpreted theologically as movement from spiritual transformation toward completion.

The seeker has:

- sought;
- found;
- become astonished;
- reigned;
- and finally rested.

Within Christian theology, rest may be associated with peace and completion in God.

However, the identification of this rest specifically with heaven should remain a theological interpretation rather than a literal translation of the Greek.

30. Complete Theological Model

The complete model developed by this study is:

One Most High God



Father, Son, and Holy Spirit



One Divine Illumination



Spirit of Truth



Human Spirit Illuminated



Mind Enlightened



Heart Awakened



γνῶσις — Knowledge



σοφία — Wisdom



ἀλήθεια — Truth



Truth Recognized



Jesus Christ, the Living Word



Truth Reigns Within



Spiritual Authority Through Christ



Reign



Rest

This entire sequence is a **theological synthesis**.

It should not be confused with the literal lexical meanings of the Greek words or with the precise wording of Gospel of Thomas Saying 2.

31. Text, Interpretation, and Theology

The study therefore maintains three distinct levels.

Level One: Greek Lexicon

γνῶσις = knowledge

σοφία = wisdom

ἀλήθεια = truth/reality

Level Two: Interpretation

Knowledge, wisdom, and Truth can be understood as related dimensions of the seeker's movement toward divine reality.

Level Three: Christian Theology

Divine illumination through the Spirit of Truth leads the human person toward knowledge, wisdom, and recognition of Truth, which is understood christologically in relation to Jesus Christ, the Living Word.

This distinction prevents theological conclusions from being falsely presented as dictionary definitions.

32. Central Theological Proposition

The central proposition of this study can now be expressed:

Divine illumination enlightens the human spirit; the illuminated spirit brings understanding to the mind and awakens the heart; knowledge develops into wisdom, wisdom leads toward recognition of Truth, and Truth transforms the person in relation to Jesus Christ, the Living Word.

In symbolic form:

Divine Illumination

↓

Spirit

↓

γνώσις

↓

σοφία

↓

ἀλήθεια

↓

Christ

↓

Transformation

33. Conclusion

The Greek concepts of **γνῶσις**, **σοφία**, and **ἀλήθεια** provide three distinct but related categories for understanding the movement from knowing toward Truth.

γνῶσις describes knowledge.

σοφία describes wisdom and deeper understanding.

ἀλήθεια describes Truth and reality.

They should not be treated as synonyms.

Nevertheless, within a Christian theological model of divine illumination, they can be brought into a meaningful progression:

Knowledge → Wisdom → Truth

When divine illumination is placed at the beginning of this movement, the model becomes:

Divine Illumination → Knowledge → Wisdom → Truth

When the human person is included:

Divine Illumination → Human Spirit → Mind → Heart → Knowledge → Wisdom → Truth

When the Christian understanding of Christ and the Spirit is included:

God → Spirit of Truth → Illumination → Knowledge → Wisdom → Truth → Jesus Christ, the Living Word

And when the model is brought into dialogue with Gospel of Thomas Saying 2:

Seeking → Finding → Trouble → Astonishment → Reigning → Rest

The resulting theological vision is one of transformation.

The seeker does not merely collect information.

The seeker is illuminated.

The spirit is awakened.

The mind receives understanding.

Wisdom develops.

Truth is recognized.

The heart is transformed.

Truth begins to reign within.

And, within the Christian interpretation proposed by this study, the transformed person participates in spiritual authority through Jesus Christ.

The central conclusion is therefore:

Divine illumination moves the human person from knowledge toward wisdom and from wisdom toward Truth; Truth, recognized through divine illumination and understood in relation to Jesus Christ, transforms the whole person.

Blog Version

Greek Word Study: Knowledge, Wisdom, and Truth

Introduction

Three Greek concepts are especially important for the theological model developed in this study:

γνῶσις — knowledge

σοφία — wisdom

ἀλήθεια — truth

These words are related, but they are not identical.

A careful study of their Greek meanings allows a distinction to be made between **knowing**, **understanding wisely**, and **recognizing what is true or real**.

The proposed theological progression is therefore:

γνῶσις → σοφία → ἀλήθεια
Knowledge → Wisdom → Truth

This sequence should not be presented as a fixed lexical definition of the three Greek words. Rather, it is a **theological model** built from their overlapping semantic fields.

1. γνῶσις — Knowledge

Greek

γνῶσις

Transliteration

gnōsis

Grammatical form

- feminine noun;
- nominative singular;
- genitive: γνῶσεως;
- derived from γινώσκω, “to know,” “to come to know,” or “to recognize.”

The basic semantic field of γνῶσις concerns **knowing, knowledge, inquiry, investigation, and understanding**. In New Testament usage, it can refer particularly to knowledge of spiritual matters.

The word therefore begins with the idea of **coming to know**.

It can be represented:

γινώσκω → γνῶσις
to know → knowledge

The noun can refer to knowledge generally, but in Christian texts it can also describe knowledge relating to God, Christ, salvation, and spiritual realities. Lexical sources note uses involving “knowledge of God,” “knowledge of Christ,” and knowledge of spiritual truth.

Theological significance

Within the theological model of this study, γνῶσις represents what the illuminated person comes to know.

Thus:

Divine illumination → perception → γνώσις

The person first receives understanding of something that was previously unknown or insufficiently understood.

Knowledge is therefore an important stage of illumination.

But knowledge is not necessarily the final stage.

A person may possess knowledge without possessing wisdom.

Therefore, the model proceeds from:

Knowledge → Wisdom

2. σοφία — Wisdom

Greek

σοφία

Transliteration

sophia

Grammatical form

- feminine noun;
- nominative singular;
- genitive: σοφίας.

The semantic range of σοφία is broad.

Classical Greek sources use the word for **skill, cleverness, intelligence, practical wisdom, learning, and wisdom**. It can refer to skill in an art or craft, practical judgment, intellectual excellence, and higher wisdom.

In Jewish and Christian Greek, the word can also refer to **divine wisdom** and spiritual wisdom. New Testament lexical sources specifically identify uses referring to human wisdom, spiritual wisdom, divine wisdom, and wisdom associated with Christ.

This makes **σοφία** particularly important for a Christian theology of revelation.

Knowledge and wisdom

The distinction can be expressed simply:

γνῶσις = knowledge

σοφία = wisdom

Knowledge concerns what has been known.

Wisdom concerns the deeper understanding and proper use of what has been known.

Therefore:

Knowledge receives understanding; wisdom comprehends its significance.

Within the model proposed here:

γνῶσις → σοφία

The person does not stop at knowing.

The person seeks to understand.

3. σοφία and Divine Wisdom

The Greek **σοφία** can refer not only to human wisdom but also to **divine wisdom**.

New Testament lexical evidence identifies σοφία as being used for God's wisdom and, in several passages, for wisdom associated with Christ.

This is important for the theological framework of the present study.

If divine illumination gives knowledge, then wisdom is not merely human cleverness. It can be understood as an illumination that enables the person to understand divine reality more deeply.

The movement can therefore be expressed:

Divine illumination → γνῶσις → σοφία

The seeker receives knowledge and then develops deeper understanding.

4. ἀλήθεια — Truth

Greek

ἀλήθεια

Transliteration

alētheia

Grammatical form

- feminine noun;
- nominative singular;
- genitive: ἀληθείας.

The basic meaning of ἀλήθεια is **truth** or **reality**. Greek lexicons describe the word in contrast with falsehood, lies, or mere appearance. It can also refer to the reality underlying an appearance.

This is particularly important.

ἀλήθεια is not restricted to the idea of saying something factually correct.

Its semantic field can include:

- truth;
- reality;
- what is genuinely the case;
- truth as opposed to falsehood;
- truth as opposed to appearance.

Therefore, within a theological context, ἀλήθεια can refer to the reality of what is true.

5. ἀλήθεια and Divine Truth

In the New Testament, ἀλήθεια can refer to religious or divine truth. Lexical evidence includes uses concerning the truth of God and Christian truth.

This provides an important connection with the theological concept of the **Spirit of Truth**.

In the Johannine tradition, the expression is:

τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας

to pneuma tēs alētheias

literally:

“the Spirit of Truth.”

Thus the Greek noun **ἀλήθεια** becomes central to the Christian theological language of divine revelation.

6. The Relationship Between **γνῶσις**, **σοφία**, and **ἀλήθεια**

The three words can now be distinguished:

Greek	Transliteration	Basic meaning	Theological function in this study
γνῶσις	<i>gnōsis</i>	knowledge	What the person comes to know
σοφία	<i>sophia</i>	wisdom	Deeper understanding of what is known
ἀλήθεια	<i>alētheia</i>	truth, reality	Recognition of what is true and real

This gives the proposed theological movement:

γνῶσις → σοφία → ἀλήθεια

Knowledge → Wisdom → Truth

Again, this is a **theological synthesis**, not a claim that Greek dictionaries define the words as a three-stage sequence.

7. From Illumination to Knowledge

The theological model begins with divine illumination.

The person is illuminated internally.

The illuminated spirit receives understanding.

This produces:

γνῶσις

The person comes to know.

Thus:

Divine illumination produces knowledge.

Knowledge is therefore the first intellectual result of illumination.

8. From Knowledge to Wisdom

Knowledge alone does not necessarily transform the person.

The person must understand what the knowledge means.

This is where **σοφία** becomes important.

Wisdom integrates knowledge into deeper understanding.

Thus:

γνῶσις → σοφία

The person moves from:

“I know.”

toward:

“I understand.”

And ultimately toward:

“I recognize what this means in relation to Truth.”

9. From Wisdom to Truth

The final movement in the proposed model is:

σοφία → ἀλήθεια

Wisdom enables the seeker to recognize what is true and real.

Therefore:

Knowledge gives understanding; wisdom deepens understanding; Truth is recognized through that understanding.

This is the theological relationship proposed by this study.

The three concepts should therefore not be collapsed into one another.

10. Truth and Reality

One important feature of ἀλήθεια is its relationship to **reality**.

The Greek lexical tradition describes ἀλήθεια not only as truth opposed to falsehood but also as reality opposed to appearance.

This gives particular depth to the theological model.

The seeker is not merely looking for correct information.

The seeker is seeking what is **real**.

Therefore the movement can be described as:

Seeking → Knowing → Understanding → Recognizing Reality

Within Christian theology:

Seeking → γνώσις → σοφία → ἀλήθεια

11. Truth and Jesus Christ

The Christian theological framework developed in this study connects **ἀλήθεια** with Jesus Christ.

The Johannine tradition is especially important because it connects Christ, the Word, Truth, and the Spirit of Truth.

The Spirit of Truth is described as testifying concerning Christ and guiding believers into Truth.

Therefore the theological model becomes:

Spirit of Truth

↓

Illumination

↓

Knowledge

↓

Wisdom

↓

Truth

↓

Jesus Christ, the Living Word

This does not mean that the Greek word ἀλήθεια itself means “Jesus Christ.”

Rather, it means that **within Christian theology**, Truth is interpreted christologically.

12. Truth as Transformative Reality

The discovery of Truth is therefore not merely intellectual.

If Truth represents reality as revealed by God, then recognizing Truth requires transformation.

This provides a theological bridge to Gospel of Thomas Saying 2.

The Coptic witness describes the seeker as becoming **troubled** after finding.

The sequence is:

Finding → Trouble → Astonishment

Within the proposed interpretation, the discovery of Truth disturbs the seeker's previous understanding.

The seeker discovers that reality is greater than previously understood.

Thus:

The discovery of Truth can be intellectually disturbing because it requires the transformation of previous understanding.

13. Knowledge, Wisdom, and the Human Person

The three concepts can be connected with the human person as follows:

Spirit

↓

Illumination

↓

Knowledge — γνῶσις

↓

Wisdom — σοφία

↓

Truth — ἀλήθεια

↓

Transformation

The spirit receives illumination.

The mind receives understanding.

Wisdom develops.

Truth is recognized.

The heart responds.

The whole person is transformed.

14. A Theological Definition of the Three Terms

For purposes of this study, the terms may be provisionally defined as follows:

γνῶσις — Knowledge

Knowledge is the understanding received or acquired concerning what is revealed or discovered.

σοφία — Wisdom

Wisdom is the deeper and rightly ordered understanding of knowledge, enabling the person to perceive its significance.

ἀλήθεια — Truth

Truth is what is genuinely real and true, distinguished from falsehood and mere appearance; within Christian theology, divine Truth is understood in relation to God and revealed in Christ.

These definitions are theological working definitions built upon the broader Greek semantic fields.

15. The Three Words and Divine Illumination

The complete model can therefore be expressed:

One Most High God

↓

Divine Illumination

↓

Spirit of the Person

↓

Illumination

↓

γνῶσις — Knowledge

↓

σοφία — Wisdom

↓

ἀλήθεια — Truth

↓

Recognition



Transformation

This provides the conceptual foundation for the larger theological model.

16. Connection with the Seeker

The seeker begins with **seeking**.

The Greek concept of knowledge provides a useful way to describe what happens when the seeker begins to understand.

The seeker moves toward **γνώσις**.

Knowledge develops into **σοφία**.

Wisdom enables recognition of **ἀλήθεια**.

Thus the proposed movement is:

Seeking → Knowledge → Wisdom → Truth

When this is combined with divine illumination:

Divine Illumination → Seeking → Knowledge → Wisdom → Truth

And when connected with Saying 2:

Seeking → Finding → Trouble → Astonishment → Reigning → Rest

The two models can therefore be brought into theological dialogue.

17. Theological Synthesis

The proposed synthesis is:

One Most High God



Divine Illumination



Spirit of Truth



Human Spirit Illuminated



γνώσις — Knowledge



σοφία — Wisdom



ἀλήθεια — Truth



Finding



Trouble



Astonishment



Jesus Christ, the Living Word



Truth Reigns Within



Spiritual Authority

↓

Reign

↓

Rest

This is not presented as the lexical meaning of any single Greek word.

It is a **Christian theological interpretation constructed from the relationship between the concepts.**

18. Important Lexical Caution

The Greek words should not be forced into meanings that they do not possess.

γνῶσις does not literally mean wisdom.

σοφία does not literally mean truth.

ἀλήθεια does not literally mean knowledge.

Their semantic fields overlap, but they remain distinguishable.

The strength of the theological argument therefore does not depend upon claiming that the words are interchangeable.

Instead, the argument becomes stronger when their differences are preserved:

γνῶσις is knowledge.

σοφία is wisdom.

ἀλήθεια is truth and reality.

The theological argument then asks how these concepts may relate to one another within the process of divine illumination.

19. Conclusion

The Greek word study provides a useful foundation for the theological model of this research.

γνῶσις describes knowledge and knowing.

σοφία describes wisdom, intelligence, skill, and deeper understanding, including divine wisdom in Christian usage.

ἀλήθεια describes truth and reality, particularly in contrast with falsehood or mere appearance.

The proposed theological progression is therefore:

Knowledge → Wisdom → Truth

or in Greek:

γνῶσις → σοφία → ἀλήθεια

When placed within the doctrine of divine illumination, this becomes:

Divine Illumination → γνῶσις → σοφία → ἀλήθεια

And when connected with the seeker's transformation:

Seeking → Knowledge → Wisdom → Truth → Finding → Transformation

The theological significance of this progression is that **Truth is not merely information possessed by the seeker. Truth becomes a reality recognized by an illuminated person and capable of transforming the whole person.**

Within the Christian framework proposed by this study, this Truth is ultimately understood in relation to **Jesus Christ, the Living Word**, while the **Spirit of Truth** is understood as the divine agent who illuminates the human spirit and guides the seeker toward Truth.

Thus the study's central theological proposition can be summarized:

Divine illumination leads the human spirit from knowledge to wisdom and from wisdom toward recognition of Truth; in the Christian understanding, this Truth is encountered in relation to Jesus Christ, the Living Word.